

A Church on the Way:

Homegroup Notes

The following notes are for homegroups. I hope these simple thoughts and questions will help you and your group to engage with the vision and follow Jesus more closely.



Each session will follow a simple format:

Welcome, worship, word, witness. With a brief intro, a bible passage to read and 4-5 questions around each theme.

The brief questions and suggestions should be taken as a guide. Remember that less is often more in small groups. Leave space for the Holy Spirit to do his work and follow his lead during the evening, ask something different if you need to.

Open the session by reading the introduction - use your own words if you like.

The last question is really important, be brave, ask it.

Session One: The Vision - a church on the way

Imagine a community of people from every generation and every background **following** Jesus. Committed to **growing** and being transformed by him. Continually being filled by God's Holy Spirit, **going** into their communities and lovingly sharing Jesus in actions and words. This is the kind of church family that we want to become. We have not arrived yet, but we are a church on the way.



Welcome

Describe in a few sentences the best journey you have ever been on.

Worship

Have a time of worship/prayer. You could read Psalm 121 to help people focus.

Word

Read John 14:1-14

What do you feel about heaven after reading that Jesus is preparing a place for you?

Jesus claims to be the only way to the Father. How does this change the way you think and live?

What does the phrase "a church on the way" say to you?

Witness

What are you going to do about what you have read and heard tonight?

Finish by inviting people to pray out their actions as a way of holding it before God.

Session Two: Following - what's your story

Jesus said: "I am the way the truth and the life". We are people who are following the way of Jesus. Through his death and resurrection we have life and Jesus gives us access to God our Father. The foundation for this understanding is the bible. A Church on the Way means that we will fix our gaze on Jesus in everything we do.

Welcome

Invite people to share the key moment when they decided to follow Jesus.

Worship

Have a time of worship/prayer. Play a worship track (Try True North by Rend Collective) and invite people to listen and pray.

Word Read Mark 1:16-20

What was the cost for the first disciples to follow Jesus?

What does it mean today for you to follow Jesus?

How are the invitations to follow and the call to invite others to follow connected?

Witness

What are you going to do about what you have read and heard tonight?

Finish by inviting people to pray out their actions as a way of holding it before God.

Session Three: Growing - Pray

Life is full of habits. Some of them help us on our way, some of them hinder us. Jesus says that he has chosen us to “bear fruit that will last”. This happens not by effort, but by remaining or abiding in him. Later in the bible it says, “let us throw off everything that hinders us.” We want to grow as followers of Jesus and to be fruitful. So we are encouraging everyone to take up five habits as we travel The Way of Jesus. If we want to fulfil the big call of God on our lives then it starts with growing strong in the daily habits. Pray, Read, Join, Commit and Give. Tonight we are going to be looking at prayer.

Welcome

What do you imagine your perfect prayer life would look like?

Worship

Have a time of worship/prayer. Look at the worship ideas on /leaders if you need a suggestion.

Word Read Matthew 6:5-15

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show each person something new in the passage tonight.

Give people a bit of space then ask, what do you see in this passage tonight?

How can you make prayer a daily habit?

If you need additional questions...

What does this passage teach us about God the Father?

Witness

What are you going to do about what you have read and heard tonight?

Finish by inviting people to pray out their actions as a way of holding it before God.

Session four: Growing - Read

In the song book of the bible it says, "your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" (Psalm 119:105). The more we fill our minds with the bible (the word), the more opportunity there is for the Holy Spirit to guide our thinking and living. Find a plan and pattern that will help you read the bible everyday.

Welcome

What and how much do you read or watch on a regular basis?

Worship

Have a time of worship/prayer. You could ask people to be quiet and then read Psalm 139 over them. (Slowly).

Word Read Psalm 119:105-112 and Romans 12:1-2

What does David mean by, "your statutes are my heritage"?

How have you experienced the word being a lamp for your feet?

How do you read the bible?

What difference would it make if you read the bible on a daily basis?

Witness

What are you going to do about what you have read and heard tonight?

Finish by inviting people to pray out their actions as a way of holding it before God.

Session five: Growing - Join

Following Jesus is not something we do alone. We have so much to learn from others as we follow his way. During his life on earth, Jesus had a small group of followers called disciples. They traveled together, sharing life's experiences and learning from Jesus and each other. The early church continued to gather in smaller groups.

At All Saints, our small groups are called homegroups. They are one of the key building blocks of the church. They provide one of the best places for people to connect with God, connect with each other and grow as followers of Jesus in everyday life.

Welcome: Ask - How do you respond when you go to a party/event where you don't know many people?

Worship: Ask people to think of one thing that they are grateful to God for and pray them out.

Word Read Luke 10:1-23

How does Jesus teach people in the passage?

(If people are struggling.... 1. Clear Task (1-12), 2. Feedback (17), 3. Correction (18-20), 4. Public Affirmation (21-22). 5. Private Blessing/Encouragement (23-24).

Give an example of how you have experienced Jesus teaching you?

(Comment: Luke 10:1-23 is a brilliant example of Jesus teaching his disciples, but also of how healthy homegroups should function.)

What do you appreciate most about meeting in a homegroup?

What needs to happen in our group for it to function really well?

(You could draw up a list of things together and then take them in to the last part of the session)

Witness

What are you going to do about what you have read and heard tonight?

Finish by inviting people to pray out their actions as a way of holding it before God.

Now would be a good time to look ahead at session 9 - Throw a Party. You could begin to suggest the idea and even set a date.

Session six: Growing - Commit

How willing are you to commit? Life gets busy and we consciously or unconsciously set priorities. There are things that we commit to every day. We all brush our teeth, eat meals and try to pay the bills before they are red. But what about committing to be with your church family?

We are asking everyone to commit to coming to one of the Sunday services, once a week. To find one that you can call home, even if you may drop into others occasionally.

Welcome

What has been your best experience of belonging to a church family?

Worship

Have a time of worship/prayer. See the ideas on /leaders if you a prompt.

Word Read Hebrews 10:19-25

What do you understand has come before the “therefore” of verse 19?*

What are the benefits for us (as described in Hebrews 10:19ff) of what Jesus has done?

What difference does the invitation and attitude of vs 22 make?

Read Acts 2:42-47

From the Acts and Hebrews passages, what are the benefits of meeting together?

What are the benefits of being committed to one service as Mark has asked?

*If you get stuck on this first question then you might want to watch a great summary of Hebrews, but don't get distracted from the issue for the night - committing...

www.thebibleproject.com/explore/hebrews/

Witness

What are you going to do about what you have read and heard tonight?

Finish by inviting people to pray out their actions as a way of holding it before God.

Look ahead to the to party and make plans.

Session seven: Growing - Give

Let's be clear up front, it's not just about the money. This last habit is about our whole lives, our attitude to others and living generously.

When God calls Abraham in Genesis 12:2 he says:

"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you;

I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing."

This is how we are to live, blessed to be a blessing. When we live like that we will transform our church and our communities. Each of us has some time, some talents and resources that we can give for the blessing of others.

So the last habit is for us to be the kind of people at that give generously.

Welcome

When the end of a shared meal arrives and it's time to split the bill, do you:

- a. Do a mental check of how much you have had, round up and throw in a roll of notes?
- b. Insist on getting a full breakdown and make sure everyone pays exactly the right amount?
- c. Escape to the toilet in the hope that someone will cover for you?

Worship

Have a time of worship/prayer.

Word Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

What is helpful about the principles that Paul lays down in verse 7?

How does this apply to the rest of your life (it really is not just about the money)?

How are you doing with being a cheerful giver?

Where are the places in your life where you could live more generously?

Witness

What are you going to do about what you have read and heard tonight?

Finish by inviting people to pray out their actions as a way of holding it before God.

Look ahead to the to party and make plans.

Session eight:

Going - the great Co-mission

Jesus told his disciples: "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you". The commission that Jesus has given us is not one that we do alone. But rather we have a co-mission. He chooses to fill us and partner with us by the power of his Holy Spirit. We do not carry empty words and ideas, but rather the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. This is crucial in sharing faith with a generation who often need to experience Jesus before they believe in him. Following the way of Jesus means that we will grow in love for God and our neighbours. We will become more engaged with our communities, acting justly and loving mercy.

Welcome: Describe what happened the last time you asked for help?

Worship

Spend some time worshiping and glorifying the Holy Spirit, thanking the him for his presence and guidance. Invite him to speak to you during this session.

Word Read Matthew 28:16-20 and Acts 1:1-8

Pray: Holy Spirit come and speak to us... (Important because these passages are probably very familiar to people)

What resonates most about the passages?

What is most uncomfortable about the passages?

What difference does it make that Jesus promises to be with us and promises power?

What do you think that Mark means by Co-Mission? And what difference might it make in your conversations with those that don't yet know Jesus?

Extra: it might be helpful to have a conversation about cultural shift and the need for people to experience God before they understand. How has our culture changed over the last 50 years? What difference does this make to how we engage with the great Co-Mission?

Witness

What are you going to do about what you have read and heard tonight?

Challenge: Start the day by praying... "Holy Spirit show me what you're doing today in the people around me a help me to join in."

Finish by inviting people to pray out their actions as a way of holding it before God.

Look ahead to the to party and make plans.

Session nine: Going - throw a party

We have talked about following, growing (with the five habits) and going. Your challenge this week has two parts:

1 - Throw a party. You could do it as a group or support individuals to do it.

Here are four ideas about what you could do:

1. Neighbourhood drinks party - invite your neighbours to a drinks party. You could simply say - "we would love to get to know our neighbours better, please join us on..."
2. Go bowling and invite some friends (or arrange a golf day if that's more your thing).
3. Throw a birthday party for someone in the group and use it as an excuse to invite your neighbours/friends to party with you.
4. Ask a neighbour or colleague out for a coffee

2 - Before you host the event - pray something like this: "Holy Spirit as we step out thank you that you go with us and before us. Come and show us what you are already doing and help us to join in..."

The vision is to be a church on the way, getting ready to grow. As we walk into these simple habits we make space for the Holy Spirit to move and we get to join in with the great Co-Mission.